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5123 Old Plank Rd.  
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# 38<sup>TH</sup> annual GOLF OUTING

**Putt for a  
Purpose!**

Monday, June 11 at  
Forest Akers West

[www.highfields.org/events](http://www.highfields.org/events)

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### Featuring live auction: Bring a Family Together!

Your gift of \$100 will bring a family member to Highfields for Family Treatment Weekend, including transportation, meals, and family-focused activities. You also will help families receive access to education, training and resources surrounding the challenges of parenting.

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# BRIGHT FUTURES

Summer 2018

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## One Year to Live

*Imagine you were told your child only had one year to live? What would you do? Who would you turn to? Here's Jessica's story...*

### A Terrifying Diagnosis

It all started when Jessica gave birth to her son, Peyton. He was born with a genetic disorder called Microcephaly, which means that his head and his brain do not grow normally.

At four months old, Peyton's head hadn't grown at all. The doctors told Jessica that he wasn't going to live past 1 year old.

"It stuck in my head that I'm only going to have him for a year," Jessica said. "I had a mental breakdown."

For the next several months, Jessica and her partner, Daren, struggled to cope with the diagnosis. Jessica had coddling issues with Peyton and was very overprotective.

When Peyton turned 1, and continued to show progress, Jessica was

**At four months old, Peyton's head hadn't grown at all.**

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**One Year to Live** (continued)

unable to celebrate the milestone.

“I couldn’t enjoy those moments with him because I was constantly stressed about his condition,” she said.

**Sibling Challenges**

During that time, Jessica was neglecting her other children, Haley, age 6, and Karter, age 4, and observed Karter’s behavior changing. As the middle child, and the only other male sibling, he started to act out and began to self-harm.

Jessica was referred to Highfields’ Home-Based therapy program to help with Karter’s behavioral issues. She and Daren worked with Highfields’ Counselor Ruth Vanderpool-Combs to try to get their lives back on track.

Ruth taught Karter coping skills and strategies to help him with his anger, including ways to calm down and self-regulate.


As Peyton got older, he had the same aggressive tendencies as Karter, on top of other developmental challenges, so Ruth stayed with the family and began to focus on Peyton.

Peyton has delayed development, sensory issues and uses nonverbal communication. Ruth used games and activities to help him open up, share, and engage with his siblings.

Ruth and Jessica also used materials like balloons, rice, and play dough to help Peyton overcome his sensory challenges.

**“We’re Ready”**

Ruth recently closed her case with the family, and although it’s bittersweet for Jessica, she’s in a much better place.

“There was a time in my life when I really needed somebody, and lucky for us, we got Ruth,” said Jessica. “Now, it’s time to take a break and really see how Daren and I do on our own. We’re ready.” 



Jessica

**Until no family needs us, we need you!**

You can help Highfields change lives and strengthen communities for future generations! We offer options so you can choose the gift that works best for you.

If you’d like to learn more about including Highfields in your will or estate plan, please contact Bev McGill at 517-628-2287 x332 or [bmcgill@highfields.org](mailto:bmcgill@highfields.org).



(L-R): Raymond, Quentin, Timothy, and Brian

**Parenting 101**

*You helped bring a family together!*

**A New Chapter**

After twelve years together, Brian and his husband, Raymond, decided to start a family. Neither of them had any experience raising kids, but it was a challenge they were ready to face.

They began the process of obtaining a license to adopt or foster a child, and in 2014, they had their first placement, a 6-year-old boy named Quentin.

**Raising a Foster Child**

Quentin was already receiving services from Highfields’ Wraparound program due to being in foster care and having a few academic and behavioral concerns. Wraparound Facilitator, Brandi Davis, began working with the family when Quentin came to

live with them.

“Wraparound was a great experience,” said Brian. “Brandi was great at her job, and very knowledgeable. She helped us and gave us resources that we needed.”

Brian and Raymond attended Parent Management Training, which helps parents and caregivers manage the behavior of their child.

**Forever Family**

Brian and Raymond finalized their adoption of Quentin in 2016. They decided to expand their family more, and 9-year-old Timothy was placed with them. They requested Brandi for the adoption process.

“She was great at assessing everyone’s needs and keeping us organized,” said Brian. “Without her, we would have been lost.”

Now Brian and Raymond have adopted Timothy into their family, and successfully closed their Wraparound case. Although they will miss Brandi, they are ready to continue on the journey of parenthood.

“We have learned a lot about how to become better parents and about understanding the needs of children who are in placement,” said Brian.



**Highfields services**

Highfields is a nonprofit human services organization providing opportunities to children, youth and families through home-based counseling programs, a residential treatment facility, and educational services.

Highfields provides 17 different programs in 13 counties and serves over 8,300 individuals every year.

**Our Mission**

*To provide opportunities to children, youth and families to become more responsible for their own lives and to strengthen their relationships with others.*

**Our Vision**

*To create bright futures for children, their families and communities.*

**Our Locations**

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[www.highfields.org](http://www.highfields.org)

